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CHAPTER I

OUTLINE OF CULTURE IN MALEKULA

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

THE islands of the New Hebrides form a long archipelago stretching for about 400 miles from north to south between the 165th and 170th parallels of South Latitude and the 13th and 20th degrees of West Longitude, about midway between the Solomon Islands and Fiji, and flanked on the south-west by the Loyalty Islands and New Caledonia.

The southern islands of this archipelago are few and far between. In the centre is the island of Fate, with Vila, the port of call. Close by, on small islets, are two Polynesian-speaking communities whose ancestors are thought to have drifted over from Polynesia in comparatively recent times, but which have not greatly affected the culture of their neighbours. Some fifty miles northward of Fate the archipelago divides, one branch going due north and the other north-west. The nodal point where these two branches divide is a volcanic area containing two active craters, one on the small island of Lopevi consisting of a single volcano rising sheer from the sea, and the other on the larger island of Ambrim where, in 1913, a whole Mission station was engulfed in an eruption. Westward of this lies the southern portion of Malekula, an island sixty miles long, forming the base of the north-westerly branch of the archipelago. Off its south-eastern coast lie the Maskelyne Islands, and at the western extremity of its southern coastline is South-West Bay, where Deacon did most of his field-work. It is from this southern and south-western region of Malekula that the artificially elongated skulls found in so many museums have been acquired, cranial deformation not being practised in the more northerly regions of the island. It is here also that exists the elaborate mortuary ritual during the course of which these skulls are mounted on wooden effigies and preserved in the men's houses.

Very different from the relative isolation of South Malekula is the situation of the Small Islands that lie off its north-eastern coast. They are in the fortunate position of facing inwards towards the comparatively enclosed inland sea bounded on the south by Ambrim, on the east by Raga[1] which stretches due north of Ambrim, on the north-east by Oba, and on the north-west by Malo and the largest island of the group called Santo. The islands that bound this inland sea, together with Maewo[2]

[1] Also called Pentecost.

[2] Also called Aurora.

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Connexion between na-leng and artificial elongation of the head.

One further matter of comparative interest is worth mentioning also, namely that the type of beauty chiefly associated with those dances in Seniang is intimately connected with the practice of artificially elongating the head. This type of head-deformation, or head-beautifying as the natives see it, is restricted to the south and south-west of Malekula, and in Seniang only such youths as have finely elongated heads are allowed to take part.

Na-leng performances very flexible, both in form and in manner in which they are used.

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I began this section on the *na-leng* by pointing out that the dances and plays called by this name represent what is perhaps the most conscious element in the whole complex of Malekulan culture. As such, they are also the most flexible, and in the case of burlesques of the secular variety new ones are constantly being invented. Indeed, it is of the essence of the secular plays that they *should* be new, or if, as often happens, a successful play is repeated, that new features should be added. The dances, being much more highly organised and involving a greater number of participants, have not yet emancipated themselves from the traditional initiation pattern to the same extent, but even they possess a much greater elasticity of form than the processional or circular dances, which change much more slowly. For the same reason, they are more movable also in a topographical sense, parties of performers vying with one another in showing off their new conceits, and so seizing every opportunity that offers to perform in other villages. Thus, while the organisation of the *na-leng* is still on a kinship basis, the ritual occasions on which they are performed are apt to be taken in a particularly light-hearted way. On the other hand, when the community is depressed they are often the first ritual element to be dropped out, the excuse of being "too lazy" to perform being one which is admitted in the case of a *na-leng*, but unthinkable in the case of the more fundamental aspects of the rite.

Dances of na-leng type from New Ireland.

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It is therefore interesting to note that, in the only other part of the Western Pacific from which dances of *na-leng* type have been recorded, namely the Tanga group of islands off the east coast of New Ireland, these dances form part of a secret society initiation rite that has recently been introduced from the neighbouring mainland.[1] It is also perhaps not without significance that New Ireland, whence this society came, is not far from Arawi (Arue) on the coast of New Britain, which is the nearest point to Malekula where artificial elongation of the head is practised,

[1] Bell, pp. 311 ff.

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881 initiated into manhood at home. Secondly, while, as we shall see, Initiation into Manhood is, like the Maki, a communal rite intimately bound up with the whole social organisation and is obligatory on all *youths and boys of a given social group* once the preparations for it have been made, Initiation into Sex is undertaken only by individuals according to their own desire and at a time that suits their own individual taste.

Having now given some indication of the complex origin of the various elements out of which Initiation in the Small Islands is built up, I will make a brief survey of the North Malekulan rites of Initiation into Manhood, before giving the details of this rite as it is performed on Vao. The separate rite of Initiation into Sex will be described in another chapter entitled "The Pilgrimage to Oba." [1]

INITIATION INTO MANHOOD: GENERAL

(1) INCISION AND CIRCUM-INCISION

881 304 I shall begin with the phenomenon of incision and its relation to the more complicated operation hitherto known as "circumcision," but which, for reasons given below, I propose to refer to as "circum-incision" practised in two restricted areas in the group.

Operations described.

The operation of incision consists briefly in inserting a hardwood stick between the foreskin and the upper or dorsal side of the glans penis, and making a longitudinal slit in the foreskin by cutting on to this with a bamboo knife. The foreskin is not removed, but remains attached to the corona, and, as the wound heals, hangs down exposing the glans.

This is the most usual form of the operation as performed in the Small Islands of Malekula. There are, however, a number of variations. Thus in North Raga two slits are made, one dorsal and one ventral.[2] In another variant reported from Tanna the foreskin, after having been incised in the manner described above, is "cut down on either side of the penis so as to leave a wing of skin on each side. This appears to be gathered under the penis, where after it is healed it forms a lump nearly as large as the glans. The larger the operation, the more of a man does it make the boy." [3]

There are, however, two areas where the operation is carried a stage further, in which the foreskin, after having been longitudinally slit, is then cut round laterally on either side in such a manner that the whole foreskin is removed and thrown away into the water. This is the operation to which Rivers, possibly not knowing how it was performed, applies the

[1] Chapter XX. [2] Speiser, 3, p. 204. [3] Speiser, 3, p. 204, quoting W. Gray.

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term "true circumcision." It will be seen from the description, however, that it is very different from the operation of circumcision as practised by the Jews and so introduced into Europe, and for this reason it is necessary to find for it a distinctive term. Owing to its close connexion with the simpler operation of incision, I therefore propose to coin a new term and refer to this operation in future as "circum-incision."

The main district in which this is carried out is that of the Big Nambas inhabiting the North Malekulan plateau.[1] A similar operation has been described by Tattevin as being performed by the Pornowol in South Raga, among whom, as among the Big Nambas, "the piece of skin that has been removed, as well as the stick and the bamboo knife used during the operation, are thrown into the water."[2]

Penis-wrapper concealing glans and penis only.

Throughout all those parts of the New Hebrides where either incision or circum-incision is performed there is found also a characteristic male dress, namely, the plaited penis-wrapper so distinctive of Malekula, Ambrim and South Raga in the Northern New Hebrides, and the island of Tanna in the south, and entirely absent from the remaining islands, where no such operation takes place. This remarkable garment—which, but for a string or bark-board belt, is the sole article of male clothing—consists of pandanus leaves stripped and plaited by the women so as to form a band which in the Small Islands may be some sixteen inches long by two or three inches wide, dyed red and furnished with tassels at either end. This is wound tightly round the base of the penis, and round and round again, the free end being then tucked under the string belt worn round the body immediately above the hips, the penis being thus held upwards in line with the belly. No effort whatever is made to clothe either the testicles or the root of the penis. The sole purpose of this method of dress is thus seen to be the concealment of one portion of the body only, namely, the mutilated foreskin and the glans penis which would otherwise be exposed.

Such scrupulous care is taken to conceal the exposed glans that not only will a man turn aside when micturating but he will even wear his penis-wrapper while bathing, removing it for his ablutions only when it is under water.

Penis-wrapper not due to fear of sorcery.

Among a people who have few other signs of sexual shame it is clearly important to discover if possible what motives should lead to this apparently excessively prudish behaviour. As part of his attempt to analyse Melanesian culture on lines of simple culture-contact, Rivers advanced

[1] Deacon, 4, p. 263.

[2] Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 402, and Deacon, *loc. cit.*

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304 the theory that of the two operations of incision and what he calls "circumcision," but I refer to as circum-incision, the latter was the earlier but became "modified" into incision by the intrusion of the "kava people," who did not themselves practise either operation but, owing to their lack of womenkind and the preference of the indigenous women for circumcised men, were forced to meet them half-way and so compromised by submitting to a half-measure in the form of incision.[1] He further supposed that the adoption of the penis-wrapper in the New Hebrides and of other methods of hiding the exposed glans in Polynesia was due to an indigenous dread of magic of the type known as *narak* in certain parts of Malekula. Quite apart from the manifest superficiality of so purely mechanistic a theory, this supposition immediately falls to the ground when it is realised that (*a*) the Big Nambas, who are the chief tribe practising circum-incision in the Northern New Hebrides, are also the only tribe practising either form of operation who drink kava, (*b*) that they are the only tribe practising either form of operation who have chiefs, and (*c*) that "although the Big Nambas are aware that among their neighbours there exist forms of death magic which are worked over such things as nail and hair parings, they themselves do not practise any such magic, and for this reason have no fear that the piece of foreskin thus thrown away may be used for malevolent purposes by a sorcerer." [2] It is for this reason that no care is taken to hide away the foreskin, which is simply thrown into the water, whence it might so easily be retrieved if any such magic existed, and that in the same way, among the Pornowol, who also practise circum-incision, the sole reason given even for bothering to throw it into the water is "to prevent the pigs from eating it." [3]

Incision a sacrifice performed on the body conferring spiritual power located in the mutilated part.

If we now turn to what the natives of the Small Islands themselves say when asked why such care is taken to conceal the mutilated part, their characteristic answer, far from being one indicating fear, is one of pride, namely, that they do not wish to expose that for which they have paid such a high price, meaning the price paid in pigs and other valuables for the operation and for the accompanying initiatory rites.[4] Now, the chief pigs referred to are those which have been either paid by way of fee to the mother's brother, or else sacrificed to the ancestral ghosts. This

[1] Rivers, 1, vol. II, pp. 432-6.
[2] Deacon, 4, p. 263, footnote.
[3] Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 402.
[4] Compare Rivers's own statement in an unpublished MS. on incision in the Sulol district of Ambrim, embodying information collected after the publication of his *History of Melanesian Society*. He says: "There is an objection in Ambrim to the glans pen[is] being seen, but . . . this is not due to fear of magic or fear of any other kind, but is because they have paid for the exposure of the glans in the Pakvi [Initiation] ceremony. They object to any one who has not so paid seeing what they have paid for."

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is, however, only part of the sacrifice, and indeed is paid as a rule not by the novice himself, who is but young and has as yet little or no property to dispose of, but by his kinsmen on his behalf. Pigs sacrificed can be replaced by others, but there is one sacrifice that cannot be retrieved, and that is the sacrifice performed on the novice's own body, namely, the incision or circum-incision itself. It is not easy to understand how Codrington, whose judgments are usually so accurate, could say that "circumcision" (which he uses indifferently to include incision) "is not a mark of initiation and has no religious or superstitious character," [1] unless it was that most of his time was spent on islands where these rites are not practised or have been only recently introduced and so are valued chiefly for the prestige they confer. This statement is quite certainly not true of the main areas where the practice is carried out.[2] No native gives anything away for nothing, even to kinsmen, and in his dealings with ghostly powers the same principle holds no less good, though in this case the gain looked for is a spiritual one. On general grounds, therefore, I suggest, though I cannot prove, that the fundamental reason why the mutilated portion of the body should be so carefully concealed is due to the psychic power gained in return for the material sacrifice, a power centered in the mutilated part and so to be jealously guarded from view.

Penis-wrapper a sign of sacrifice and protection of the power located in the glans penis.

Thus in South Raga the "uncircumcised" are called *wah mal-mal*, "those who go naked."[3] This phrase may refer overtly to the fact that uncircum-incised boys, like male adults in the matrilineal dual organisation area further north, wear no clothes. But when we remember that the chief purpose of clothing among those who incise is to cover the glans penis exposed by the operation, we see that the expression "clothed" really implies the substitution of an artificial protection for the glans instead of a natural one, and that the penis-wrapper worn throughout Malekula is thus the sign of bodily sacrifice, and is itself designed to protect those wearing it from the loss of power so painfully

[1] Codrington, 3, p. 234. There are of course cases in the New Hebrides, as in Maewo, where the operation is not a tribal one but is undergone as a mark of social prestige. This is, however, only part of the New Hebridean fashion for "collecting" rites. In Vao and in the neighbouring Small Islands no man can marry unless he is incised, the reason given being that women do not enjoy intercourse with an unincised man, lacking as it is in the extra pleasure afforded by the free-hanging foreskin. In Tanna (Gray, quoted by Speiser, 3, p. 204) the operation is considered to make a man fruitful, a clear rationalisation from the spiritual to the physical sphere.

[2] Another misconception is to be found in Speiser's suggestion (3, p. 204) that incision is a prophylactic measure against phimosis. This is a twentieth-century rationalisation of a kind that Crawley calls "the fallacy of sanitary intention" (Crawley, vol. I, p. 170).

[3] Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 402.

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acquired by those who are "clothed" but lacking in those who are unclothed.[1]

In this case, the concept of being "naked" is seen to be a spiritual one similar to the "nakedness" of Adam and Eve before they had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, by which they emerged from a state of undifferentiated nature and acquired the status of rational beings.

Unincised are "like women," i.e. undifferentiated.

So also, for instance, in the Small Islands the unincised youth is said to be "only a woman," by which is simply meant "undifferentiated," and only becomes a "man" when he is incised and made to suffer every kind of humiliation and is at the same time taught those esoteric secrets which, though in many cases apparently futile in themselves, bring him into direct contact with the ancestral ghosts and, by creating in him a new spiritual life unshared by women, make him into a full member of the tribe.[2]

In this way the act of incision, together with the accompanying initiation rites, achieves a triple result. In the first place, the undifferentiated youth becomes differentiated from nature by means of the sacrifice performed on his own body. This sacrifice in turn creates in him a new spiritual power having its seat in the glans penis. Thirdly, the glans penis, having through the operation lost its natural protection, must be provided with a new one. This artificial protection is the plaited penis-wrapper, which in the case of incision serves to cover up the exposed glans, while in the case of circum-incision it also actually replaces the lost foreskin, and it is possibly partly on account of this latter fact that the wrapper in use among the circum-incised Big Nambas is so much larger than that used by the coastal tribes, who are only incised.

Thus, while the wearing of a penis-wrapper is in one aspect a symbol of shame in so far as the mutilation or removal of the foreskin represents

[1] As evidence from further afield of the power thought to reside in the glans and the consequent necessity to conceal it, though in this case by somewhat different means, it is worth quoting a passage pointed out by Rivers himself to the author of *Male Infibulation* and included in that work, namely, that "Japanese wrestlers . . . are often accustomed to pull the prepuce as far over the glans as possible, then twisting the end they cover the whole with the scrotum, which is presumably tied up in some way in order to serve the purpose. This is done because a superstition is current amongst them that if the glans is uncovered bodily strength evaporates through that organ."—(E. J. Dingwall, 1, p. 92, quoting from B. Adachi, *Ueber den Penis der Japaner.*) It is interesting also to note that "amongst the native workers in the South African mines, Joest had noticed that during the examination held on the gold-fields, the circumcised natives took care to hide the glans, whereas the uncircumcised were not so particular." (Ibid. p. 98.)

[2] Compare the Kikuyu of East Africa, where an uncircumcised child is "not yet . . . considered a human being," and the Damaras, who "reckon a man's age from his circumcision, not counting the previous years at all" (Crawley, vol. II, p. 3.)

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a departure from nature and is thus liable to call down the wrath of nature on the mutilated person who presumes to trick her by means of an artificial substitute, in its cultural aspect it is a sign of manhood and of man's ability, through sacrifice, to conquer nature, expressed in the phrase that till a youth is incised he is "only a woman."

In a sense, therefore, the penis-wrapper may be regarded as a container in which the seat of power is enclosed. Thus, in the Small Islands, so long as the newly incised novice is still secluded during his thirty days' confinement within the Initiation Lodge, though his wound is often healed within ten days, there is still no need for him to wear a penis-wrapper since the Lodge itself is consecrated and itself wraps him round. But once the period of seclusion is over he must adopt it before re-entering the world so that on no account shall the power leave him.

Penis-wrapper the distinctive dress of all who incise or circum-incise. Term "Big Nambas" means "Big penis-wrapper."

In this way the penis-wrapper has come to be the distinctive dress of all those New Hebrides tribes who practise either incision or circum-incision. As I have said, the largest examples of this type of dress are the truly enormous ones worn by the Big Nambas who practise circum-incision and inhabit the North Malekulan plateau. Among them the tassels project sometimes as much as eight inches in front of the body and hang down considerably more. The word Nambas is simply a Europeanised form of the term used for penis-wrapper in some of the neighbouring Small Islands, as, for example, in Atchin where it is called *na-mbwes*.[1] The term Big Nambas now used by white men to designate these folk thus means "Big Penis-wrapper," and the term Nambas Culture is now used by some for the whole culture-complex of which the wearing of this type of garment is the most striking external sign.[2]

[1] *Na* is the indefinite article. The noun is *bwes*. Compare Wala *bwes-bwes*. The corresponding Vao word *nu-mba-nu-mbe*, however, refers only to an inferior type of penis-wrapper made out of a split banana leaf worn by boys before initiation and retained later as an under-garment beneath the plaited wrapper. The same word for banana-leaf wrapper is found in South Raga under the form *pih-pis* (see Tattevin, I, 1926, p. 403). Dr. Ivens points out the connexion of these words with the Solomon Islands *vusi, pusi*, "to cut," i.e. "circumcise." The Vao word for the plaited penis-wrapper is different (see p. 483).

[2] The scattered literature regarding mutilations of the genital organs has been summed up in the article on "Circumcision" in *Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. There also the "fallacy of sanitary intention" mentioned in the footnote to p. 479 of this volume is summarily disposed of, and the conclusion is drawn that among all peoples of the world, embracing about a seventh of the whole population, who practise such mutilations they in all cases have a sacrificial origin. The practice of circumcision is of course best known to us through its performance by the Jews, among whom it became adopted as a tribal mark when it came to be regarded as a token of the covenant between the people and Jahweh (Gen. xvii. 10). This was, however, a

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(2) NAMES BY WHICH THE RITE IS KNOWN IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS

The terms used in Malekula both for the operation itself, whether this be incision or circum-incision, and at the same time for the whole initiation rite of which the operation forms but a part, fall into two groups.

South Malekulan Area

Whole rite called by variants of the term hab or av used for penis-wrapper. Short form of the rite with ten-day period of seclusion.

The first, which I propose to refer to as the South Malekulan group, is based on the syllable *hab* or *av*. Used for the whole rite, including the

secondary development of an earlier sacrificial conception emphasised metaphorically in many biblical passages such as that in which the Children of Israel are urged to "circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked," and further "the Lord will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed . . . that thou mayest live" (Deut. x, 16; xxx. 6; see also Jeremiah iv. 4; vi. 10; ix. 26). St. Paul also recalls the sacrificial nature of the act when he refers to "putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ" (Col. ii. 11 ff.; see also Rom. ii. 25 ff.; Phil. iii. 3 ff.; Gal. ii. 7-9). It appears, moreover, that in early Hebrew times the full operation of circumcision as practised in the historical era was unknown and that it was at one time "sufficient to cut off the end of the foreskin" (Barton, p. 679); in other words, as in Central America, to sacrifice a part, however small, for the sanctification of the whole.

Authorities agree that the Hebrews derived the rite from Egypt, where it was practised chiefly by the priestly and also probably the royal castes and was "a mark of submission to a god, or alliance with a god, a sign of initiation into a god." It is said also that Ra mutilated himself and that circumcision was in imitation of this (Foucart, p. 676).

Here those offering to the gods had to be without physical blemish, and, as among the Hebrews, uncircumcision was a blemish, which it was the object of circumcision to remove.

Among more primitive peoples the same motive is found. Thus the Yoruba call circumcision "the cutting that saves" (Ellis, p. 66), and among the Mahummedan Malays the rite is called *buang malu*, "casting away of shame." Among others, as we have seen with regard to the New Hebrides, the sacrificial nature of such operations is no less evident. Many reasons are given, such as it being a necessary preliminary to marriage or a prophylactic against the dangers of first sexual intercourse, not of course on medical grounds, but as a sanctification of the generative powers. In all cases, however, the basic motive is that of sacrifice, and L. H. Gray (p. 665) comes to the conclusion that it is a preparation for sexual life only "in so far as it is a preparation for the duties and privileges of manhood." It is this latter view that undoubtedly prevails in the North Central New Hebrides and particularly in the Small Islands where, as we have seen, initiation accompanied by incision does not include Initiation into Sex, for which a separate rite is needed.

For a further illuminating discussion of the meaning of bodily mutilations see Crawley, Chapter VI. For circumcision among the Jews see also the article on this subject in *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*.

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operation, it has been recorded only from South and South-West Malekula in the forms:

na-hab-habien in Seniang;[1] and
na-av-avien in the shorter of two forms of the rite in Lambumbu.[2]

This word appears to be primarily connected with the short form of incision rite listed on pp. 474-5 under (*b*), for which no special Lodge is built and which lacks the elaborate hoaxes listed under (*c*). It is, moreover, clearly connected with the Seniang *ava'ap*, meaning "penis-wrapper," which, interestingly enough, survives also in Vao under the form *na-avu*, though in this island the name used for the whole rite belongs to the North Malekulan group. Yet another survival is found in the name of the village from which the whole rite in the Small Islands is said to have been derived, namely, *N'av-av*,[3] a village I have never been able to locate and which quite possibly may not exist.

North Malekulan Area

Rite called by variants of a term probably meaning "shark."

The second or North Malekulan group includes the whole of Central and North Malekula and all the Small Islands, and also extends to the Sulol district of Ambrim, where the words used for the rite and for the operation itself are:

Vao	*bagho* (with article *na-mbagho*)
Atchin	*baho*
Wala	*mbahi*
Big Nambas	*bagho*[4]
Laravat	*na-wen bwōgh*[5]
Lambumbu (long form of the rite)	*no-wei na-mbōg*[6]
Ambrim (Sulol) . . .	*pakvi*[7]

These terms are everywhere, except in Ambrim, associated with the longer form of the rite listed on p. 475 under (*c*) involving a period of seclusion lasting thirty days including subsidiary seven-day periods, and for which a special Lodge of large dimensions is erected in which elaborate hoaxes are carried out.

That this North Malekulan form of the rite is definitely later than that found in the south, which involves a period of seclusion lasting only ten days and has been imposed upon it, is shown in many ways. A good illustration of this is the situation in Lambumbu, where, as already

[1] Layard, 2, p. 221, but Deacon refers to it as *ne-tambu*.
[2] Deacon, 4, p. 249.
[3] See pp. 283, 496.
[4] Deacon, 4, p. 260.
[5] Ibid. p. 256.
[6] Ibid. p. 249.
[7] Rivers, 3, and 2, p. 231.

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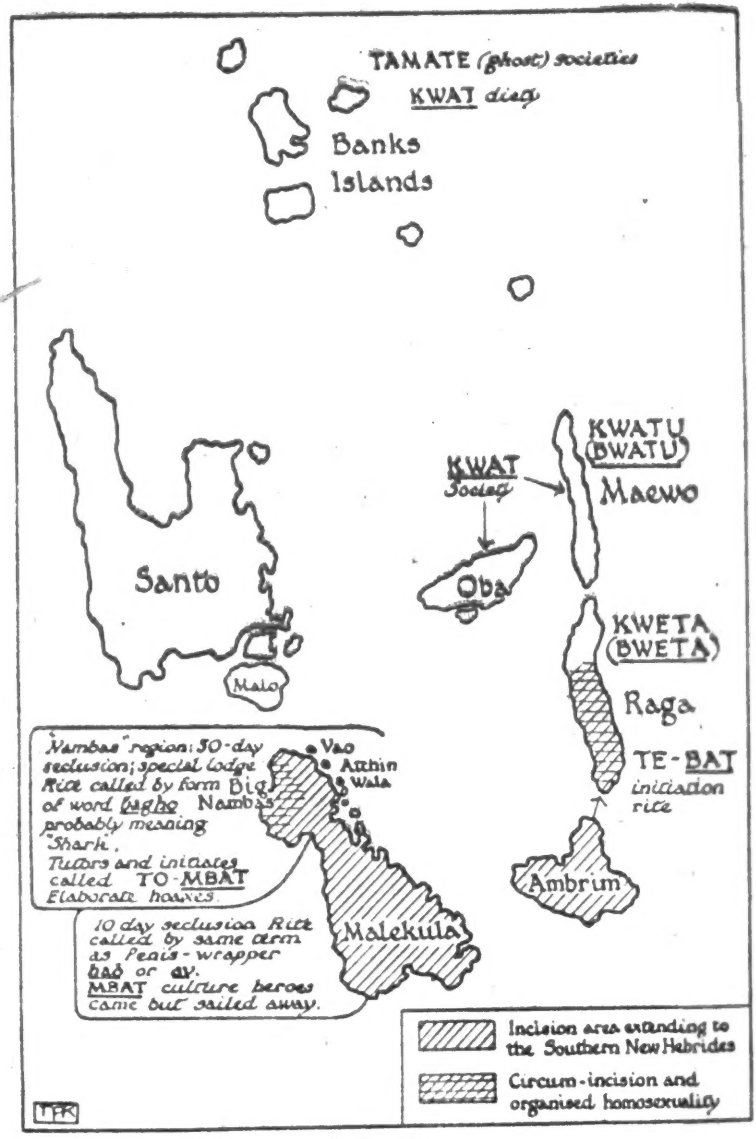

MAP VII

Sketch-map to illustrate Initiation.

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mentioned, there are two forms of the rite: (*a*) a shorter form still practised in the southern half of this small territory; this shorter form is called by a name belonging to the southern group, namely, *na-av-avien*, of which the essential syllable is *av*, associated with the word used for "penis-wrapper"; and (*b*) a longer form recently introduced from the more northerly district of Laravat, called *no-wei na-mbŏg*, of which the significant syllable is *mbŏg*, belonging to the northern group of names of which the Vao form is *bagho*. The duality of this longer form of the rite in Lambumbu is seen in the fact that, though the period of seclusion lasts thirty days, the actual operation is not performed till the tenth. In Atchin this dual origin is even more apparent, for there the operation is performed on the day before that on which the thirty-day period of seclusion in the special Lodge begins, the intervening night being spent by the incised youths in the ordinary village Lodges.[1]

The centre of distribution of these later additions to the rite in North Malekula, of which the chief feature is the elaborate hoaxes, appears to have been in the twin villages of Lawor and Bot-walim on the east coast opposite Wala, whence they spread inland to the Big Nambas and Lambumbu and up the coast to the Small Islands of Wala and Atchin, whence it is only now beginning to penetrate Vao.

So struck was Deacon with the hoaxes that, speaking of the Big Nambas, he says, "The importance of *bagho* lies, not in the circumcision itself, but in the series of performances or 'hoaxes' which take place during the thirty days' seclusion."[2] He later elaborates this theme by drawing a striking parallel between the whole initiation rite as now performed in North Malekula and the "devouring monster" type of ceremonies found in such districts as the Finsch Harbour area of the Mandated Territory of New Guinea.[3] There can be little doubt that this parallel is essentially correct.

Further evidence for this is the way in which the operation itself is likened to the biting of a shark, the chief devouring monster in this part of the Pacific, associated in the Small Islands of Atchin and Wala with the Guardian Ghost. Thus in Atchin the operation is called *bahi e hatsi*, "the shark bites,"[4] and the hardwood stick inserted between the foreskin and the glans penis is called *memen bahi*, "the shark's tongue." It is indeed probable that the name given to the whole rite originally meant "shark," as seen in the very close similarity between the words used for it in North Malekula cited above and those used for "shark." Thus, the Wala word used for the rite, namely, *mbahi*, is philologically identical

[1] See also p. 510. [2] Deacon, 4, p. 264. [3] Ibid. p. 268.
[4] Compare the gong-signal called "the ghost bites," sounded at the moment of re-birth, indicated by the taking of new names in the Ni-mangki and Nelemew rites of the village of Vevenah in North-West Malekula (Deacon, 4, p. 370).

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881 304 with the Atchin word for shark, *bahi*, one of a long series of Melanesian words meaning "shark," including

Atchin	*bahi*
Mota	*pagoa*
Gilbert Islands	*bakoa*
Marshalls	*bako*
Ponape	*poko*
New Guinea [1]	*paowa*

all derived from the Indonesian *pa-iwak* meaning "giant fish." What is apparently a dual use of the word is seen in the phrase used on the morning of the operation in the Sulol district of Ambrim, namely, "*pakvi* is going to fight today," [2] in which *pakvi* is the name of the rite though the phrase can only mean that it at the same time represents a devouring monster.

Circum-incision called *Kol-kol*

The only term that I recorded as being applied specifically to circum-incision is that given to me by the natives of Atchin, who themselves only incise, for the operation of circum-incision performed among the neighbouring Big Nambas. This word is *kol-kol*, which I think can hardly be related to the *kolekole* rites in the Banks Islands, but is more likely to be connected with the same two syllables appearing in the name given to the creator-deity *Bar-kol-kol* or *Bar-kul-kul* in South Raga and in the neighbouring district of Olal on Ambrim, in which latter place, according to Suas,[3] he is believed to have introduced circum-incision. What further significance is attached to the word I cannot say, though Tattevin [4] suggests that the syllable *kol* in *Bar-kol-kol* means "strong." Possibly relevant to this is the fact that both among the Big Nambas and in South Raga circum-incision is associated with the organised homosexuality between novices and their tutors referred to below, and that among the Big Nambas it is said that the purpose of this is to make the passive boy-lover's male organ "grow strong." [5]

(3) HOMOSEXUALITY

838 *Organised homosexuality a feature of circum-incision areas.*

I have already called attention to the organised practice of homosexuality existing in the two areas where circum-incision replaces the more usual incision, namely, among the Big Nambas and in South (and apparently also in North) Raga. The explanation usually advanced with regard to the Big Nambas is that the chiefs have so many wives [6] that the commoners have to content themselves with substitutes in the form of

[1] Taken from Codrington, 2. He does not state what part of New Guinea.
[2] Rivers, 3. The corresponding phrase in Atchin is *baho pu pal*, meaning "*baho* will sacrifice."
[3] Suas, 1911, p. 906. [4] Tattevin, 1, 1926, pp. 389-90. [5] See p. 488. [6] See p. 740.

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isation it could be adopted as an everyday practice in the manner described by Deacon, and has led also to the adoption of the very large penis-wrappers worn by these men.

Active homosexuality in circum-incision areas replaced in the Small Islands by threats of homosexual action on the part of ghosts.

So much for the Big Nambas. From Raga, the only other area from which organised homosexuality has been reported, we have no details by which to test the validity or otherwise of what has just been suggested.

When we turn to those tribes in this area which practise only the simpler operation of incision, we find that, though homosexuality exists among them, it is unorganised and not carried to anything like the same extent as among the Big Nambas.[1] Thus in the Small Islands though novices address their tutors (or guardians), as among the Big Nambas, as "husband" and in some cases the tutor reciprocates by calling his novice his "wife," they do not necessarily have homosexual relations and the terminology does not extend into secular life, but, on the contrary, the novices throughout the rites are constantly threatened with homosexual action on the part of ghosts.

Relation between incision and circum-incision.

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Such threats without action suggest the possibility that the whole motive of ghostly homosexuality has been derived from the circum-incision area, and in this case Rivers may be right in regarding incision as being a degraded form of circum-incision, though not on the grounds he states. On the other hand, the Small Islands attitude towards ritual homosexuality as a spiritual phenomenon connected almost exclusively with ghosts and with initiation may indicate a more archetypal view. In this case circum-incision as an exaggerated form of incision would fall into line with other exaggerated forms of culture indulged in by the Big Nambas such as their extreme cannibalism and the incessant wars they wage among themselves.

I do not propose to attempt to solve this problem, but will content myself with pointing out the fact that, while the operation of incision is spread over almost the whole of the Southern and Central New Hebrides, circum-incision as practised among the Big Nambas and in South Raga occurs only in the extreme north of this area. Here also the moot point is raised as to whether it is the starting-point from which the degraded practice of incision spread south or whether, since according to Codrington incision came from the south, it is an ultimate development and is itself an exaggerated form of incision. In this respect it must be remembered that Codrington's evidence rests on the very slender foundation of a purely local movement from Ambrim to Raga and very recently northwards to Maewo. But since any coastal movement spreading from Malekula to

[1] See p. 487.

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Ambrim in the way that the Maki has spread might then automatically move northwards along the eastern chain of islands, this is in fact no evidence at all regarding the larger movements of culture.

Homosexuality in Egypt and Fiji.

Two facts of comparative ethnology should be mentioned before leaving this subject. We have seen how in the district of Lambumbu the homosexual relationship takes on a fearful form when connected with ghosts. The same is true also of the Small Islands, where it is always connected with threats. It is therefore of interest that in ancient Egypt ritual homosexuality appears to have been connected with punishment or revenge. This is summed up in an article by Mr. G. D. Hornblower [1] in which he says, "the notion of unnatural vice seems to have been connected in the ancient Egyptian mind with enemies," and cites the case of Set threatening to treat his dire enemy Horus as a woman, adding: "It may be that the word *hmti*, meaning 'woman-like,' which is an insulting term applied to enemies, refers, at least inferentially, to the indignity in question." He then mentions how, at an annual festival held in Cairo on the birthday of a Sheikh, "a public representation was given on a cart of the act of paederasty," which appears to have been regarded as a religious act and was suppressed some forty years ago.

Replying to this article the late Professor A. M. Hocart wrote a letter to *Man* which, however, was never published, but from which Mr. Hornblower kindly allows me to quote. He says: "His [Mr. Hornblower's] facts tempt me to bring forward a suggestion which I have for years had in mind, but been unable to confirm so far. It is that sodomy was once recognised between cross-cousins." He adds: "This rests on the flimsiest of foundations," but I include it here because his evidence is taken from the hill tribes of Fiji who, as stated by Dr. Haddon, in certain physical respects resemble the Big Nambas,[2] and some of whom also practise circumcision.[3] The facts cited by Hocart are as follows:

"(1) In the hill tribes of Fiji male cross-cousins address one another as *veidhakavi*, which means 'to do to one another,' a euphemism for copulation. It may, however, be that the term has been improperly transferred from cross-cousins of opposite sexes.

"(2) There is in various parts of the Pacific a very close bond of friendship which I take to be a survival of cross-cousinship among people who have lost the relationship. In Hawaii it is called *kaikane*, 'eating man,' a term which is also a euphemism for sodomy.

"(3) Cross-cousins continually fight and cheat one another in sport. This sporting, and sometimes rough, feud has in many cases degenerated into earnest."

[1] G. D. Hornblower, *Man*, August 1927, No. 97.
[2] A. C. Haddon, 1, p. xxii.
[3] Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 436, quoting Fison.

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I witnessed on Atchin may have been an extreme case, but the principle applies throughout the Small Islands and must be borne in mind in the ensuing description of the rites.

TALE OF ORIGIN IN MAINLAND VILLAGE OF N'AV-AV (VERSION GENERALLY CURRENT IN SMALL ISLANDS)

It will be remembered that in the analysis given in the last chapter of the two main forms of initiation rite in Malekula the use of the word *na-avu* for penis-wrapper on Vao appeared to indicate a certain connexion with the earlier form of the rite now practised chiefly in the South, and that in the Small Islands generally, at any rate in Atchin and Vao, the whole rite is said to have originated in a village on the Malekulan mainland bearing the same name N'av-av.[1] The story current on Atchin is as follows:

In the mainland village of N'av-av there were two brothers, of whom the elder was married but the younger not. One day, when the younger brother was in the bush cutting bamboos with which to make a fence, a sharp piece of bamboo sprang back and cut open his foreskin. The cut was so bad that he was unable to bring the two sides together, so that they remained gaping apart. But he managed to stanch the flow of blood, and forthwith applied to his wound all the curative medicines now in use after the operation of incision, and when it had healed he donned for the first time a penis-wrapper, though where this came from is not stated.

One day this youth met his elder brother's wife in the bush and had connexion with her. Never before had she found intercourse so pleasant, so much so that when she next slept with her husband his ministrations no longer pleased her as they used to, and all the time she was with him she could not keep her thoughts off his younger brother "on account of what she had felt." This feeling increased as time went on, till finally she told her husband that since she had known his younger brother his own intercourse had lacked savour. So the husband told one of his friends of this, and begged him to watch the youth and find out what it was that had made his body so pleasant. So the friend concealed himself in the bush and watched while the younger brother took off his wrapper to relieve himself. Then he returned to the husband and told him how his younger brother's foreskin was slit.

The elder then asked the younger how he had done this, and his brother replied by telling how the bamboo had cut him. As a result of this, and of the news of the younger brother's success with women, all the men of the village clamoured for the same thing to be done to them. So a day was appointed for incising all the men of the village, and they

[1] See p. 483.

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made a garden[1] and sacrificed pigs for their mothers' brothers and performed all the rites now associated with initiation.

Then, when all was over, the elder brother went back and resumed intercourse with his wife, after which she said, "Now I feel that your mode of intercourse is good like your brother's," and thenceforth stayed with him.[2]

To-wewe.

In the Vao version of this story it is said that To-wewe, founder of the existing Vao Maki, was the younger brother, and therefore also the introducer of the operation of incision. It is further said that in the days of the old type of pre-Maki rite centering round a single large dolmen practised before the advent of To-wewe,[3] there was no incision. This would appear to indicate a close connexion between incision and the Maki. My informant Pelur, however, explained that, whereas To-wewe had founded the existing Vao Maki of N'av-av while yet a child, it was only later, when he grew up, that he had the accident with the bamboo which gave rise to the operation of incision, the introduction of which thus appears to have been later than that of the Maki.

"First Men" of Initiation

In spite of this local story of origin, however, so many new rites have been purchased from Atchin that the inhabitants of that island are now looked on as the originators of the whole rite, and are called *bot na-mbagho*, "founders (or, as it is expressed in pidgin-English, "first men") of initiation," and it is for this reason that, in whatever Vao village the rite of initiation is performed, the speech announcing the date of the operation must be made by a leading member either of Singon or of Lavame, the two villages which first bought the rite from Atchin.

It is an interesting sidelight on stories of origin and the general question of the diffusion of culture that, though from the point of view of the natives of Vao the "first men" of initiation are the inhabitants of Atchin, for these latter the "first men" are those of Wala, and for the natives of Wala this position was formerly held by the men of the double mainland village of Lawor and Bot-walim, from whom they themselves derived the rite. Thus, each latest village to acquire the rite refers to the last link in the chain before it as the first, though in fact they know that

[1] Initiation proceedings on Atchin open with the planting of a special yam-garden.

[2] It is in complete accordance with native thought, based on a conception of moieties of which one is superior and conservative and the other inferior but progressive, that the younger of two brothers should be the first to introduce any new idea or adopt any new custom.

[3] See p. 283.

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Operation performed on the shore. Preliminary hoax. Novices' wounds washed by their fathers in the sea.

Any skilled man may perform the operation, an act called *e lohure*. If on any specified occasion there are many such experts, the novices belonging to each Lodge go to their own special places on the beach. If, on the other hand, there are only one or two, all go to the same place. Here each novice in turn is made to stand up against a tree, to which his tutor clasps him while at the same time blindfolding him by means of a money-mat (the same as will later be presented to the operator as his fee) held over his eyes. Then tutor and operator both address him, telling him not to shake or flinch, but to bear the operation bravely.

The operation, called *bagho*, and for which the verb is *baghoi*, is performed by inserting a hardwood stick between the foreskin [1] and the upper side of the glans penis,[2] and cutting on to this with a bamboo knife, the result being that the foreskin, while still attached to the corona, hangs down exposing the glans. The operation is similar to that performed on Atchin and in all the neighbouring islands, and a more detailed description of it, together with the personal reactions of the novices, will appear in my forthcoming work on that island, where I was fortunate enough to witness it. On Vao the bamboo knife is called *tele*, and the hardwood stick inserted into the foreskin *memen ne tele*, "the knife's tongue," a term which, in the opinion of the Atchin folk, is insipid and uninspiring in comparison with their own term "shark's tongue," referring to the swallowing monster.[3]

As soon as the operation is over, the tutor removes the money-mat from the novice's eyes, and drops it on the ground as payment for the operator. As soon as it has been removed and the novice has sufficiently recovered his wits to see, the tutor addresses him, using the kind of symbolical language associated with initiation, and saying "Look down. See, your *ghavigo* ('malay apple') is red."

The novice looks down, and is then made, apparently unaided, to walk down to the sea, where his father now takes charge of him, and, making him sit down at the water's edge, washes his wound in the salt water,[4] his tutor being now free to walk about and watch the operations on the other novices.

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Mothers' brothers arrive dancing Na-rel, inspect the novices and are beaten.

When all the operations are finished, and the novices are ranged in a row at the waterside having their wounds washed, the noise of singing

[1] Called *tember* (or *usul na kalon*, literally "skin of the penis").
[2] Called *wohin*. Compare *wohoi*, "to plug up a hole" (see p. 467).
[3] See pp. 485-6.
[4] All wounds, of whatever nature, are washed whenever possible in salt water, which is known to have healing properties.

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is heard, and on to the scene bursts a procession consisting of all the mothers' brothers of the novices, together with other male relatives on the mother's side, dancing and singing songs belonging to the *Na-rel* cycle. Arrived at the spot where the novices are sitting, each mother's brother bends down to splash some water over his sister's son's wound, and, as he does so, is beaten by the boy's patrilineal kinsmen. This is the only occasion on which, to my knowledge, mothers' brothers are beaten during the initiation rite on Vao, a great contrast to Atchin procedure, and one giving rise to the term "good initiation" already mentioned [1] by which the Vao rite is known.

Novices eat red yam, symbolic of blood, and are then hoaxed into believing that a triangular piece of foreskin has been removed.

While still having their wounds washed, the novices are given to eat a species of red yam, here called by the special term *ühüngerĕ*, symbolic of blood. This being only a symbolic act, and the taste of this yam being far from good, each novice takes only a bite of it, and then throws the rest into the sea. This being done, he is then given as much good roast white yam as he cares to eat, but it is not till the fifth day that he is allowed the pleasure of eating puddings.

At the same time, in consonance with the dual attitude on the part of the elders of mental bullying alternating with care, the ground is laid for a hoax practised seven days later, by persuading the novice that the gap in his foreskin caused by the incision has been made by the actual removal of a triangular piece of skin, an imitation of which he will then, to his horror, be expected to eat.[2]

First medicinal treatment.

When the blood from the wound of each individual novice has ceased flowing, he is conducted a little way up the beach to a spot where his tutor administers the first of a series of medicinal treatments. In this treatment the curative element is the juice obtained by heating a species of seaweed called *mĕlavŭ* over a fire.[3] In the application of this each tutor is assisted by another,[4] who places his hand over the glans penis to protect it, while the boy's tutor squeezes the juice over the wound. After this, the wound is gently stroked with leaves of a kind called *na-mbor* similarly heated over a fire and then folded, so as to clean the wound and remove

[1] See p. 500. [2] See p. 518.

[3] It is to be noted that most seaweeds contain iodine and other mineral salts which are both antiseptic and astringent.

[4] In Atchin each tutor, who is addressed by the novice as "husband," has one or more assistants called "lovers," and it is one of these who assists on such occasions, and performs all the more menial duties allocated to the "husband." I do not know whether the same holds of Vao, or whether the assistant in this case is simply another patrilineal relative or the tutor of another novice.

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any clots of blood that may remain.[1] The penis is then wrapped in a dressing of soft leaves of a kind called *ro vile-vile*, over which is then wound the usual boy's penis-wrapper made of the split half of a banana leaf, called *nu-mba-nu-mbe*.[2]

Novices enter initiation house.

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After this application, each novice lies down on the beach to await the ceremonial procession into the initiation house.

When all are ready, and have rested a little, all the men of the village join in a procession from the beach inland to the dancing-ground, dancing and singing songs of the *Na-rel* cycle. The tutors dance among the rest, each with his novice beside him. The novices, however, hardly feel like dancing, and walk as best they can, each carrying a club of a kind called *wura*[3] over his left shoulder, while in his right hand he holds a twig cut from the hardwood tree called *tor-tore*, which he moves up and down as if it were an adze. This twig is called by the same name *tele*[4] as the knife with which he was incised, symbolical of the operation he has just suffered.

So the procession, some singing and dancing, while the novices bemusedly wave their mock adzes, makes its way up the path into the dancing-ground. As they enter the ground a single pig is sacrificed and the gongs strike up the rhythm called *na-mbe ne-ôs-ôs*, to the accompaniment of which they process to the further end. Then the singing ceases, and, to the accompaniment of a fresh rhythm, called *na-mbe ril-dralen*, the procession turns, and moves silently in the serpentine course called *gha vire-vire* back over the ground till, finally, they leave it and enter into the special house built for the novices on the high ground behind the Upper Side.

3. THIRTY DAYS' SECLUSION

Must not be seen too close by women.

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Here, and in the surrounding enclosure, they remain for thirty days, accomplishing their *rite de passage* into manhood, corresponding to the similar thirty-day period elapsing between physical birth and the child's first presentation to the world.[5] On Atchin, during the corresponding thirty-day period, the novices may not on any account be seen by women.

[1] This treatment also indicates considerable medical knowledge, whether conscious or no, it being generally accepted in European surgery that the presence of a blood clot predisposes both to infection and to the formation of redundant scar tissue.

[2] Informal penis-wrappers made in this way are adopted without ceremony by boys who are about to attain puberty but have not yet been initiated. The word *nu-mba-nu-mbe* is a reduplication of a form of the word *na-mbwes* used on Atchin for the plaited penis-wrapper worn by adults, for which the Vao term is *na-avu*.

[3] Possibly the same as the Atchin *n'ei e ras*.

[4] More usually used for a shell adze.

[5] See p. 179, also the thirty-day period of retreat after the Maki (pp. 394, 402).

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suddenly, in burst the others, disguised with paint to represent the ghosts of old men (*ta-mat mōt*). Those within, feigning terror as great as that with which they wish to inspire the novices, emit frightened cries, shuffle and cower like birds, and, finally, simulating regained courage, line up in front of their now startled and trembling wards, holding long bamboos horizontally before them as a kind of protecting fence, against which the alleged ghosts hurl themselves in their effort to get at the boys. It has already been seen to by the tutors that the novices are well aware of the awful fact that any one of them whom one of the ghosts succeeds in striking will some day be killed in battle. They are, however, powerless to move, being hemmed in between the sloping roof and the line of protecting tutors. Sometimes matters are so arranged that the tutors win, and the ghosts retire in discomfort. Sometimes, however, one of the ghosts will break through and strike a novice, to his dismay. Then the ghostly party utters ghoulish cries: "*Hui! . . . hui! . . . hui! . . . ?.*" [1]

Medicinal Treatment by Means of Infusions and Steaming

Administered by the tutors; assisted on the first three days successively by initiates from all villages on the island.

During the ensuing five days the novices' wounds are treated by means of infusions and steaming, the administration of which is a semi-public act affording an opportunity for initiates from all villages on the island to view the progress of the novices. Thus, when the rite of initiation is being performed in Pete-hul, boys' tutors are assisted in the application of the remedies by initiates from this village and from Tolamp; on the second day by initiates from Pete-hul's twin-village, Togh-vanu; and on the third day by initiates from villages on the other Side of the Island in the usual order.[2] On the fourth and fifth days the treatment is continued by the novices' own tutors only.

Mock names for remedies.

In accordance with the mock language used in initiation, these remedies are all called by the name of a bird, *na-wagh*, but the leaves from which they are made are called by the names of fish, thus:

	Name of the Leaf used to make the Infusion	Name of the Fish by which the Leaf and Remedy are called
1st remedy . .	*rōmbi*	*mov-ghat*
2nd remedy . .	*rombon na-nāh*	*hulup*
3rd remedy . .	*bor-mbaru*	*dirav*

[1] This form of cry is called *ra hūrti tōgh-wōwū*. Though no overt mention of homosexual acts was made in this account, the connexion of such with sudden death in battle is clearly seen in the final hoax perpetrated on the 107th Day (see p. 519).

[2] See p. 300.

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Mode of application.

In all cases the method of administration is the same. The leaves, all of which must be of one of the three kinds mentioned, are broken up and placed in a basin made out of a number of umbrella-palm leaves, into which water is also poured and a red-hot stone put in to heat it. The leafy basin is then folded up for a short time, during which the water draws out the juices from the leaves. In folding up the basin the leaves forming it are so manipulated that a kind of spout is left, by means of which the infusion is then poured over the wound, after which the packet is opened and placed beneath the wound so that the steam rising from it shall continue to play around and soothe it.[1] As each packet is opened, the tutor addresses the novice and, pointing at the leaf from which the infusion has been made, says, "You see this leaf. You used to call it (*e.g.*) *rŏmbi*. Well, its real name is *mov-ghat* (the name of a fish). Now you know." The novice dutifully repeats the mock name, and duly pays for the esoteric knowledge with the customary fee of a plaited belt or other small object.

For three days the novices may not drink, nor for four days may they eat puddings.

For the first three days after the operation the novices may not drink water, since the passing of water is both painful and necessitates the too frequent removal of the dressings; nor may they for four days eat puddings, which are considered too rich, but are fed chiefly on roast white yams.[2]

The prohibition against drinking water may also have a ritual significance. It is specifically mentioned in connexion with initiation in all districts, and a similar prohibition is a feature of ritual abstinence on many other occasions, as in gong-making.[3]

To what extent the restrictions on food also, eminently sound as they appear from our point of view, can be said to be based on medical grounds is doubtful, since their application is in all cases ritualised, and as such is regarded by the natives as part of the system of ordeals that the novices have to endure. Thus ritual demands that the restrictions begin and end for all novices at once, irrespective of their individual physical condition.

The raising of the restrictions follows the usual initiatory pattern in that (*a*) a farcical homily is addressed to the novice and (*b*) the novice must pay.

Third Day

Removal of restriction on drinking water. Mock name for water.

The ban on the drinking of water is brought to a close on the evening of the third day, when one of the initiates brings a bambooful of water

[1] Equivalent to a hot fomentation, producing hyperaemia.
[2] The word for roasting is *tun-tun* (Atchin *tu-tun*). [3] See p. 355.

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At the same time the commercial aspect of the rite has led to a yet further secularisation and in some cases to devices by means of which a rich man will pauperise his rivals with great gifts which he knows they can never repay.

FIG. 87

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My informant Ma-taru, desiring to preserve a memento of me on my departure, chose to do so by measuring the length of my nose and scarifying a mark of equal length on his daughter's shoulder. He and his wife are here seen holding the dry strip of pandanus leaf with which the measurement was taken against their daughter's arm in order to mark out the correct length for the scarification. The wife's head-dress and loincloth are of trade "calico."

3: Harrisson N-5 (1934-1935) 1936
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Tattoo is elaborately humanistic in the Banks Islands; simpler on Pentecost, with occasional spirals and circles; intricately angular on Omba; on Santo simple geometric patterns, almost entirely non-representative. Scarification replaces tattoo in Sakau. On Malekula I have not seen tattoo.

I found that chance, individuality, error, misinterpretation, war, and wind were most important in determining the cultures I investigated; these are allowed no place anywhere in Rivers' 'History of Melanesian Society' (1914). I have also much evidence for the spread of ideas and objects ahead or independent of the people who originally brought them, often accidentally, to one point. There is little evidence to be found for logical coherent waves of the Riversian "*kava* people" type into this part of Melanesia. And whereas movements have generally been considered to pass from the north southwards, there is no doubt that the two most obvious diffusions which I have been able to trace spread westward from Omba, which was almost certainly effected from the east, and northward from Efate through Emae, Tongoa, Hambi to south Malekula; important culture traits in Santo have largely been derived from Malo to the south. After studying the literature and the people themselves, I have come to the conclusion that the culture of south Melanesia is even more complex than had previously been supposed. Far more data are needed to make any broad generalizations valuable. There are still whole islands about whose culture we know nothing. The forthcoming work of Layard, and to a lesser extent my own, will I think demonstrate that some of the north Malekulan and Atchin traits can be associated with ritual or belief all over the Pacific and in much remoter parts of the world. These islands seem to have received the last flickers and backwashes from every step in world evolution: that is true for the period of white influence too.

Present position in the Group

The white is in general disliked by the native: mission natives sometimes like their missionaries. What respect black has for white is founded on what the former calls the latter's "cleverness"—the things he can make, his tinned sardines and launch engines. Among many peoples now, especially on Omba, Efate, Tongoa, and Nguna, there is a dawning determination to have some say in their own affairs. Now the natives have no control of any sort; they know they are being underpaid or misused. Their lack of unity has been and is the main obstacle to reform. Land in particular will be a future problem. On some islands the French claim more land than there is above water; they vigorously curtail the expansion of the native in every direction, and notably on Aore and Malo have driven out whole villages. Among the bushmen anti-white feeling is generally strong but passive; for here there is little concern with the small world outside. And whereas the bushmen are without exception decreasing, the coastal peoples in many parts, and invariably when close to a missionary and his medicines, are increasing.

On the basis of a very detailed study (to be published elsewhere) I am convinced that a hundred and fifty years ago there were not less than one million natives in the group; there are now about forty-five thousand. "Civilization" has crept on, though perhaps more slowly than anywhere else in the world. It is the missionary and the germ that has made the coast safe for civilization.